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Nick Thimmesch

The CIA

Sheds Its

Old Shell

Outside, the pleasant campus around the Central Intelligence Agency's headquarters looks like it does every spring—resplendent with blooming lilac and dogwood trees. The main building retains its strong, bureaucratic appearance. The friendly guards take away any ominous edge suggested by the wire fence.

Inside, there are few visible changes. New TRW machines efficiently screen employees on entry. The recent "openness" is advertised on bulletin boards featuring clips of what the outside world is saying about the CIA these days. That information would have brought scowls to the faces of great intelligence figures of World War II, the cold war and the Vietnam tragedy.

But they are ghostly names now, as technocrats increasingly dominate the CIA.

In recent years the once monolithic CIA has taken typhoon-force blows from super-liberals, hawkish jingoists and demented revolutionaries. Vietnam, Watergate, congressional investigations—all sapped its strength.

The United States remains strong, so there has been a natural recovery of the CIA, but the degree is debatable.

Critics claim that President Carter's order of reorganization, the resulting shift of 820 positions, the severance of 260 employees and an unimaginative,

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spiritless leadership by Adm. Stansfield Turner, whom Carter made director, have kept the agency in turmoil.

But some defenders say that CIA operations have been improved by the changes; the quality of the intelligence product has never been better; Turner, a Navy classmate of Carter, has no plans to leave.

Whatever, there is no question that the CIA, like a crustacean, has shed its old shell. The men who tracked the Soviets in the cold war, countered revolutionaries in the Third World and tried to make the Vietnam war work are gone—men like Richard Helms, James Angleton, William Colby, Ray S. Cline and Vernon Walters.

The new order is younger, more specialized and would never risk wearing a trench coat. They are far less likely to pound fists on tables or utter oaths when confronted with, say, the great scrambling of organizational boxes the CIA undertook under Turner.

The new order is more inclined toward technocratic performance. This means increased reliance on electronics detection, computerized data, research and development and studies in economics, geography, medicine, physics and other sciences.

Altogether, this means a huge jump in the volume of information collected. There are those who argue that the volume involves even more clandestine work by the CIA, because only by learning intent can the agency evaluate the enormous accumulation of intelligence.

Moreover, the CIA now lives in a world far different from the swashbuckling days of the cold war. Instead of largely focusing on the Soviet Union and Communist China, the agency must contend with 150 nations and their growing economic interdependence. The Soviets remain the prime target, and the Chinese aren't neglected, but it's obvious the rest of the world is growing up fast.

The CIA increasingly—it claims successfully—tracks terrorists, drug traffickers, oil discoveries and production, crop estimates and shifts of wealth, just to name some for purposes of illustrating variety. These studies, usually performed with more precision than drama, become reasonable estimates as to what nations are capable of doing or might be compelled to do.

While the CIA increasingly benefits from technology, certain advantages to overseas operatives aren't available any more. Since the murder of agent Richard Welch in Greece, the agency has not equipped non-CIA travelers, such as newsmen, with the names of agents to contact overseas. The terrorist threat to CIA operatives is significant.

Contact between the CIA and the journalists specializing in foreign reportage have also been discouraged. And many nations are now reluctant to cooperate with the CIA out of fear of having the relationship suddenly burst into print in the American press.

Back at headquarters, the CIA still wrestles with the matter of how to handle the question of requiring employees to live up to the contract they signed when hired—namely, to clear anything written, spoken or disseminated about the agency with the inspector's office, whether they are still employed or have left the agency.

There has been a rash of books and articles by former CIA people, some embarrassing, some merely illuminating. Agee and Marchetti and Marks wrote books the agency didn't like. The content of Frank Snepp's book didn't bother the agency as much as Snepp's publishing it without clearance. Colby's "Honorable Men" and Walter's "Silent Mission" cleared the inspector, but might make some people smirk a bit.

No reasonable American disagrees with the notion that the most powerful nation in the world needs a set of eyes and ears out there, not only to protect itself, but also to get along. We can only hope that we are getting our money's worth from the \$4 billion to \$8 billion CIA spends every year.

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CIA Ads Recruit Doctors To Treat Agents Abroad

By Thomas O'Toole
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Central Intelligence Agency is recruiting doctors to treat and care for overseas officers and paid agents at the agency's far-flung outposts around the world.

The CIA will not say why it recruits its own doctors, except to point out that it occasionally conducts "medical evacuations" from remote or threatened regions of the world where people "must be given medical support or flown out for medical treatment."

Informed sources with past ties to the CIA said the agency has long relied on its own doctors in the United States and abroad, partly because it doesn't want its officers and agents drugged, anesthetized or put in compromising medical situations where information can be extracted from them.

Through an advertising agency named Gaynor and Ducas on Madison

Avenue in New York, the CIA has placed advertisements for physicians in two of the nation's leading medical journals. One ran April 13 in The New England Journal of Medicine and the other ran April 21 in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Both ads employ the same low-key pitch. They simply say: "The Central Intelligence Agency has opportunities for physicians to serve overseas. Positions involve management of health care delivery systems for employees and dependents. Attractive benefits and opportunity for foreign travel. U.S. citizenship required."

The salary offered by the CIA is \$33,845 a year. The ads say nothing about age, experience or specialty. Presumably, the CIA is looking only for doctors who've graduated from medical school, completed their internships and passed their state medical boards.

The CIA said it saw nothing unusual in the ads, declaring it had run similar ads in 1975 and 1976. The New England Journal of Medicine said it was the first CIA ad it had received. The Journal of the American Medical Association said it also was its first CIA ad.

The CIA refused to say how many doctors it now employs or how many it is seeking through new advertising.

Former CIA officers said one reason the agency wants its own doctors overseas is to keep an eye on the physical and mental health of its officers and agents. One former officer put it this way: "The agency's people are often under great stress in overseas assignments."

Another former CIA official had a more elaborate explanation. He said in recent years the CIA has reduced the numbers of its officers whose cover is employment in American embassies. Nowadays, cover is often a private U.S. firm or institution, which means agency people no longer have access to U.S. military and embassy doctors serving abroad.